SCIENCE AND IDEALISM

HUGO MÜNSTERBERG

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By Hugo Münsterberg

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BY

HUGO MÜNSTERBERG

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PREFACE

To cement the friendship between the two oldest universities of the country the Corporation of Yale University resolved last autumn — on a foundation created by the generosity of a Harvard graduate — to invite every winter some professors of Harvard University to speak at Yale. The opening address was given by President Eliot; Professor Palmer followed with a series of lectures, and it was my privilege to close this first year's program.

In publishing the address which I delivered there I leave unchanged those first lines which refer to the passing occasion. I wish to emphasize thereby the noble purpose of this interacademic agreement and to ex-

press my gratitude for the cordial welcome which Yale University extended not only to the delegate of Harvard but to the interpreter of a new and yet old philosophical idealism.

HUGO MÜNSTERBERG.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
April, 1906.

SCIENCE AND IDEALISM

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IT is my good fortune to be to-day the messenger of cordial feeling which Harvard, in old friendship, cherishes for Yale. You will not expect from me a chronicle of this year's academic events, but I cannot refrain from a reference to the opening of one most welcome edifice. Perhaps you may consider it as professional egotism, yet I must insist that last winter's most important and most happy change in our Harvard College Yard has been the erection of a noble monumental building as a home for Philosophy, — Emerson Hall. The philosophical work in Harvard had been scattered under many roofs.

Now at last it has unity and dignity, and its imposing quarters have quickly become a new centre for Harvard's intellectual life. The significance of this movement is evident. It indicates primarily an increased interest in philosophy; it harmonizes with many other signs, all suggesting that the antiphilosophic period of the last half-century is ebbing and a new philosophic grasp of the deepest world-problems is being felt in the academic realm. The analysis of observation is being at last supplemented by the synthesis of thought. Every scholar, be he physicist or biologist, historian or mathematician, philologist or theologian, feels again the need for a critical examination of the fundamental conceptions which he is using for his special work; and such a study of the

foundations is after all the meaning of philosophy. It had been too long neglected throughout a period whose world-view was superficial in spite of the thoroughness of its narrow, specialized research.

But the significance of our Harvard movement lies still deeper. The philosophical problems may be solved in different ways. The materialist and the skeptic, the mystic and the realist, may each answer the fundamental questions after his own temper. But Harvard has called its house of wisdom Emerson Hall, and has indicated by choosing the name of Ralph Waldo Emerson that the philosophy of our time ought to be guided by the spirit of idealism. Emerson, whose bronze statue adorns the entrance of our new philosophy building, was not

a technical scholar, yet no one in this country stood more warmly, more luminously, more whole-heartedly for the deepest convictions of idealistic philosophy: he believed in the freedom of man and in the absolute value of man's ideals.

The times have changed since Emerson wrote his immortal essays. The wonderful progress of knowledge has transformed our world into a gigantic mechanism in which every atom moves according to laws, every mind works by necessity, and in which no room is left for ideals and eternal duties. And yet the old problems do return in the midst of the triumphant days of science. The erection of Emerson Hall means that our scientific time ought to ask once more: Is there anything in this world which is

really valuable in itself, anything which justifies the idealistic belief in absolute values? And therefore I thought that an answer to this life-question would be the most fitting message from our Harvard world. Of course our time is not satisfied with an appeal to emotions. No Emersonian enthusiasm can overcome the arguments of reason, and every inconsistent short-cut of thought must lead us to abysses. To claim such absolute values by hopes or inspirations, to preach ideals, is a most important practical task; but it is not that of the philosopher. His aim must be to understand the ideals. But to understand them means ultimately to deduce them all from one central, necessary principle, just as modern science since Newton deduces all movements in the universe from

one formula. This hour calls indeed for an effort to reach the real depths of the problem, however dry and technical and uninspiring the method must be, and however imperfect such an effort must remain.

Let us begin, as a plain man might begin, with the world of the natural scientist. All the sciences — physics and chemistry, zoölogy and botany and anthropology — tell us about the material system of causally connected things in space. The naturalist wants to play the passive spectator. The central idea of his account of the world is that he describes and explains, as an impartial onlooker, the causal interplay of the molecules of the universe. The chief virtues on which his success depends are the modesty with which he subordinates himself com-

pletely to the stubborn facts of the ready-made world whose laws he starts to discover, and the boldness with which at the same time he penetrates into the secrets of the universe and breaks down into atoms whatever the world creates. Is there in this universe anything valuable? Let us be consistent from the start, and let us frankly answer, No. The stars may move, the earth may grow hot or cold, men may be born and die, but from the standpoint of natural science one combination of atoms cannot be better in itself than any other possible combination. To the chemist the poison is not worse nor better than the food, and the weed is not worse to the botanist than the flower, the cosmos not better to the astronomer than the chaos. The scientist is inconsistent

in speaking of development where he ought to speak merely of a change from the simple to the complicated, from the homogeneous to the differentiated form. The standpoint of the passive spectator is abandoned if terms like "development" smuggle an ideal of value into a world which in principle is meant as a system of indifferent objects. In the realm of nature as such, we have no right to fancy that the organic being is more valuable than any single atom of the ether, that a man's life is more valuable than that of the jelly-fish.

Yet this situation is in no wise changed if the psychologist associates himself with the physicist. To be sure, he is right in insisting that the atoms in space do not build up the whole universe of science. There are con-

tents in consciousness, sensations and perceptions, feelings and impulses, which the scientist must describe and explain too. But if the psychologist is the real natural scientist of the soul, this whole interplay of ideas and emotions and volitions appears to him as a world of causally connected processes which he watches and studies as a spectator. However rich the manifold of the inner experience, everything, seen from a strictly psychological standpoint, remains just as indifferent and valueless as the movement of the atoms in the outer experience. Pleasures are coming and going, but the onlooking subject of consciousness has simply to become aware of them, and has no right to say that they are better or more valuable than pain, or that the emotions of enjoyment or the ideas of

wisdom or the impulses of virtue are, psychologically considered, more valuable than grief or vice or foolishness. In the system of physical and psychical objects, there is thus no room for any possible value, and even the thought and idea of value is there nothing but an indifferent mental state produced by certain brain excitement. For as soon as we illuminate and shade and color the world of the scientist in reference to man's life and death, or to human happiness and pain, we have carelessly destroyed the pure system of science, and given up the presupposition of the strictly naturalistic work.

Nature, material and mental, knows no values. Yet it is evident that this alone does not mean that there are no values in reality, for it would be absurd to think that the system of objects

which we call nature is the whole world of our life-experience. The fact that in physics and psychology a deliberate description and explanation of nature is going on,—does this not in itself involve the existence of an acting personality which, as such, can find no place in the system of nature? The physicist and the psychologist deal with a world of objects which exists for a passive spectator. But the physicist and the psychologist themselves are neither objects nor yet passive, and stand therefore completely outside of the natural system. They are taking attitudes in affirming the truth and in rejecting the error, and thus represent a life-experience which must be superadded to the dead objects of the scientist. Life is thus richer than nature. Yes, we can say that nature

in the sense of the scientist is not found in life at all, but is gained by a step from life, — deduced from it through a long series of abstractions. Life never shows an object of which the subject becomes merely passively aware, and life shows nowhere a subject whose function is simply to be a spectator of the procession of events. We know ourselves in and through our activities; we know ourselves not by finding ourselves as a thing among things, but by living out our active personality in our decisions and attitudes. And again the objects are ends and aims and tools and means, of this our activity. May we not even add that our fellow-men are immediately acknowledged by us as real active subjects, and not as psycho-physical mechanisms which we perceive? They

are for us agents whose meaning and aims must be understood not by description but by interpretation, and which have thus again no room in the system of nature. To speak of the material and of the mental objects as the physicist and psychologist must speak of them, means therefore to substitute conceptual abstractions for the immediate experience of our life. It means artificially to cut loose the contents of nature and of mind from the real active personality and to link them with an empty, passive subject which does not correspond to any experience. Of course, the scientist must prefer the substitution in order to reach his logical end, which is a determination of effects through causes. But every act of this performance itself proves anew that we are acting subjects in life and

never merely psycho-physical mechanisms.

But even if we are subjects with attitudes, free actors on the stage of life, has the world then really gained for us that which we are seeking, — the possibility of absolute values? Life is now for us a system of subjects who stand in will-relations to one another and to whom the things of the world are means and ends of their wills. It is a world of history which thus replaces the world of natural science, — the world of history, in which individuals follow their desires and fears, agreeing and disagreeing with one another, loving and hating, feeling happy and miserable, but in which every satisfaction remains, after all, an experience of the individual. What we were seeking was a value which is absolute,

and thus independent of individual pleasure, binding for every one who desires to understand the world. To such a height history alone can never be the guide. Of course, we may discriminate between many different kinds of personal inclinations. A given pleasure may be superficial or intense; it may be a pleasure which appeals to the animal instincts, and is therefore common to the crowd, or a pleasure which presupposes training and talent and education; and, if we are to be inconsistent again, we may call this more complex kind of pleasure the higher one. It is a higher pleasure, we may say, to enjoy symphonies and dramas than to eat bonbons; and yet here is the same logical mistake with which the naturalist calls the more differentiated organism

higher than the simpler one. If one pleasure is to be better than another, there must be a standard which determines and justifies such a scale, and the question is just how the mere historical aspect can furnish us with such an absolute standard.

There is no way to escape this relativism and skepticism. We might say that the one pleasure lasts longer than the other; the one is mixed ultimately with pain, while the other will endure; the one gives pleasure to many persons, while the other focusses all the pleasure on one; the one may bring even the greatest possible pleasure to the greatest possible number, while the other carries suffering in its course: and yet so long as we have no absolute standard, we have logically not the slightest right to insist that the

enduring pleasure is in itself better than the fleeting one; the pure pleasure better than the mixed one; the widespread pleasure better than the selfish one. Every possible effort to grade and to shade the vast possibilities of pleasure by individual standards will always lead again to the question, What is it, after all, that I or you are liking best? We deceive ourselves if we believe that the reference to the greatest pleasure of the greatest number ever brings an absolute goal which can determine that one pleasure must be better than another. We might make rules of behavior by which the maximum pleasure for all should be secured, but why ought such a rule to bind me? If the valuable is simply that which gives pleasure, then we do not know any values which are dif-

ferent in principle from the enjoyment of our senses; and no one could demonstrate to me that the pleasure of my neighbor, or the pleasure of the community or of the nation or of all fellow-men or of all future generations, is more valuable than my own pleasure of a flying instant. I may prefer the former; others may have different tastes. If there exist no absolute values, no one of us can justify his preferences, and no utilitarian commonplaces can overcome the relativity of every historical point of view.

Of course we understand very well from evolution that pleasure became associated with certain objects and ideas and acts, and that thus, on a strictly individualistic basis, certain things of beauty and wisdom and morality have been preferred before oth-

ers. But if progress and law and peace, the true and the beautiful and the moral and the religious, have been preferred simply because they gave to you or to me or to the greatest possible number the most intense possible individual pleasure, then we still remain in a world in which nothing has an absolute value, and in which every claim for every other kind of valuation is equally justified and has merely to legitimate itself as another taste for other attractions. What we call ugly or inharmonious, untrue or immoral, has just the same right to be called valuable if somewhere people chance to have so curious a liking. And every one knows that this is no vague hypothesis. Do not our sociologists amass most fascinating material to show us how in the moral

ideas of the Hottentots or the Fiji Islanders our vices become virtues, how that which is ugly to us they call beauty, and how that which is absurd they value as knowledge? Does there not run through all the history of civilization an eternal Spencerianism which triumphantly presents such facts to the naïve as proof that there is indeed no absolute standard for human ideals? Again and again have pseudo-philosophers conducted to their own satisfaction the onslaught against absolute idealism, by showing that the truth of yesterday cannot be the truth of to-day; that Chinese music is not that of Beethoven, that the law of Kamchatka is not that of our supreme courts, and that somewhere, I do not know where, moral children eat their grandfathers and grandmothers.

Yet if we say that all satisfactions are only the pleasures of historical individuals, does not such a statement again prove by its own existence something which far transcends its own short-sightedness? We claim such an assertion as a truth — but what do we mean by truth? Is it again merely something pleasurable? or do we not admit through that very act that the truth stands beyond the demands of individuals as such, and represents an absolute value which binds the individual by an over-individual power? Even if you were to deny it, at least your denial would be meant as something which has not merely individual value. If you assert that there is no absolute truth, for that dictum at least you claim an absolute character, or else you could not think

it at all with consistency. And if you stand for such an iconoclastic doctrine as upholding your conviction, can it convince us if we do not believe that you feel bound by the absolute duty of speaking the truth? If you acknowledge that you might just as well lie in your argument, you destroy your very argument itself.

Yes, we can generalize: wherever we seek the truth, we mean by it something which in itself belongs absolutely to the structure of the world and excludes its contradiction without any reference to individual preferences. I may not have the truth, but the truth I am aiming at is not meant as something which I and others like, but as something which absolutely excludes any value in its opposite. If I make an assertion with the understand-

ing that it is possible that other thinkers, other nations, other generations may with equal right uphold its direct contradiction, I have not expressed that which I am aiming at. I may have formulated a statement which fits provisionally a given situation, but if all that I call truth were of such a relative and provisional type, there would be no truth whatever; and least of all would there be such truth in a philosophy which proclaims just that provisionality as a solution of all riddles. Then, of course, the moral law to do our duty means merely an appeal to our own or our neighbor's liking, and our conscience becomes nothing but an eye peering out at the consequences of our deeds. And yet again, whoever does his duty knows that he does not intend such reference

to any one's personal preferences, and that life is not worth living if the meaning of duty is not somehow tied up with the independent structure of the world, whatever may happen to the struggling individual.

We all know the new sophists who to-day call themselves empiriocriticists and humanists and pragmatists, and who speak in our days again with picturesque and captivating epigrams. With them belong the "radical empiricists" and the "relativists" and the "aristocracists" of Germany and their sympathizers in England and America. And they all may be welcomed as starting in the right direction. They start, indeed, with a splendid emancipation from the abstract constructions of the natural scientist. They see clearly that man is not that psycho-

physical mechanism into which causal science construes him. They feel the pulse of real life and acknowledge the subject as a free agent in the historical interplay. And yet their whole emancipation is useless since they stop halfway, just as the old sophists stopped, instead of going on with Socrates and Plato. Free agents we are, they acknowledge, but free agents which know no standards and absolute values; and, as happens so often in transition periods, our pragmatists are hardly aware of their little virtues, but make a boast of their vices. They take it to be a small thing that they at last overcome the one-sidedness of a natural science which tries to impose itself on the world as philosophy, but feel proud of having nothing to do with absolute standards and eternal values. They

feel the Life, but they lack the Reason. They want to teach us, and yet warn us against the belief in truth; they want to convince us, and yet assure us that they have no convictions.

By a complete misunderstanding of transcendental philosophy, they are frightened by curious caricatures of idealism. The one group fancies that the ideal of those who believe in something absolute is "passionless imperturbability, absolute detachment, complete subjection to a ready-made and finished reality." As if the world of mathematical facts which the mathematician discovers and which are absolutely and eternally binding for every possible thinker existed somewhere ready-made and finished beforehand! The other group imagines that a belief

in the absolute reduces the truth of empirical science to a mere set of valueless ideas, which is "imaginary" and exists only "in the fooled mind that infers it." As if Kant's Critique were written to shake our confidence in the truth of science, while in reality it set out to prove that no other, no metaphysical knowledge is thinkable. Pragmatism spreads among our academic youth like a contagious disease; its first constant symptom is an eruption of epigrammatic cleverness. But these attacks, well known for two thousand years, are dangerous no longer, as the world knows to-day a completely safe remedy for them: the unprejudiced study of Kant and Fichte.

And now we turn at last to our fundamental question. What would Soc-

rates now answer to the sophists, if both spoke the language of to-day? Is there really nothing absolutely valuable in this world to which our thinking and feeling and willing refer? Is there nothing which belongs as desirable eternally to the character of reality, independent of the chance views and chance likings of chance individuals?

Of course, whenever ideals are to be valuable for me, they must somehow bring satisfaction and fulfillment to my desires: the purpose of my will must be realized. But is it not erroneous to think that my will and my desire must be always directed towards pleasure, or the avoidance of displeasure? Wherever mere joy or an escape from pain is the object, the satisfaction is indeed individual. My pleasure is a state of

mine; its realization remains thus dependent on my special needs. I may prefer the pleasure which I gain from scholarly books to that from playing cards, the pleasure from works of art to the amusement which tickles my senses; but in all cases alike I remain conscious that I speak of pleasures, however refined and subtle, however widespread and lasting; while all is in vain if I cannot discover absolute ends independent of the personal standpoint. Cannot my will aim at the realization of an end which does not appeal to my personal interest, but which I will because I enter into the willing and feeling of the independent world, and because I feel satisfied if its purpose becomes realized? All this is possible, it is clear, only if two conditions are fulfilled: the objective world

must have a will of its own, and its will must force itself upon me and must thus become my own desire.

But are we not here on a mystical path? Can we really expect to find a longing in the objective world itself? I do not recur to Schopenhauer's metaphysics, which sought a secret will in the universe, a feeling in the stars, a love and hate in the atoms. Let us approach the problem without any poetic imagination, with sober logic.

Whatever the individual personality is trying to examine and to discover, does it not always refer to a world whose ultimate structure is determined beforehand by the possibilities of subjective experience? That which is inexperienceable because in contradiction to the fundamental nature of

experience, is from the start excluded from the world from which we gather experiences. The underlying ideal of the world as a whole, that postulated background of every inquiry, must thus be conceived as dependent on ourselves, and yet evidently not on you or me or any other chance personality. The grasp which you or I take of it in a given moment depends, of course, on our individual personal condition; in that the pragmatists are quite right. But the reality as a whole, in its stubborn power, not asking how much or how little we have found out about it, — that is no longer dependent on any one who has a special family name, but on that in us which must be postulated as common to all who are to share the world. In this Socrates and Kant are completely

right, and the sophists and the pragmatists completely wrong when they overlook it.

But it is evident that we have come hardly nearer to our goal. The structure of the world may be ultimately dependent on that in our consciousness which is common to all who have the world in common, and thus on a timeless, general consciousness which comprehends only the conditions under which experience is possible at all. And yet such a world may have no will and no demand of its own. If we are ever to reach our goal, to find those absolute satisfactions, we shall have first of all to prove that our common consciousness cannot think a world without will.

A simple illustration may bring us nearer. I hear a melody. I like the

sound of that melody; it gives me pleasure, just as I like the taste of a sweet fruit. The liking of those tones is a personal taste; some one else may like better a melody of stronger rhythm. That I personally have at present just a longing for this sad little melody cannot have more than an individual, personal meaning. It is a fulfillment of personal desire, and yet no one can hear the melody without being aware that another kind of demand is fulfilled therein which is independent of my present personal feeling. As that melody approaches its end, the player is no longer free in his choice of the last notes. We may never have heard it before, and yet we feel that those first tones seek just this last tone. They long for it. The melody is not complete without it. Those tones

themselves desire that end, and whether I care to hear music now or not, I must subordinate myself so far that I must want that closing of the melody, as the demand lies outside my personal wishes. Those first tones have the right to demand that last one. Not I will it, but they will it; and as such a melody, with its own eternal rights, sounds endlessly about us the universe itself.

And now let us move straight forward to the centre of our system, from which everything radiates. Every one of us lives in a chaos of experience. Yet even the word experience is too rich for the starting-point. It already suggests that the data have been worked over and ordered, that they stand for a world. And it is still worse if we call them sensations, or perhaps

even impressions of our sense organs, because then we are completely on the track of psychological or physiological constructions, which have a meaning only if we presuppose already that we have organized the chaos of our data into a causal physical world. To explain the idea of a physical world by making it a function of the brain and the sense organs means indeed to turn the theory of knowledge upside down, since we know of the nervous system only as a part of the physical world.

Every one of us thus begins with a chaotic manifold which is logically prior to every possible physics or psychology. But by a fundamental act of our over-individual personalities, we transcend the chaos: we become intelligent subjects by creating

the idea of a world which is common to us. Yet, what else does that mean than that we grasp the elements, the parts, the groups, perhaps the whole of this chaos, and hold every bit of our experience before us as something which is to be more than a passing dream, more than a glowing spark. To have a world means to hold up the flying experience as something which is to be not experience only, but is to be itself. And yet what else can it mean to tell our experience to be itself, than to impart to it a will that it is to last, that it is to remain itself, independent of our individual experience; that it is to aim toward the preservation of its own reality; that it is to strive for loyalty to its own nature. To make a world out of our experience means, and cannot

mean anything else than to apperceive every bit of the chaos as something which must will to be itself.

But the will to be itself must lead to different demands, and each of these demands thus introduces a special group of values into the world, eternally given with its deepest ultimate structure. To be itself may mean, firstly, that our bit of experience is to be preserved, is to last through ever new experiences and is to be found again and again. The satisfaction of this demand gives us the values of truth. But to be itself may mean, further, that our bit of life experience is to stand for itself, complete in itself, independent of everything beyond it. The satisfaction of this desire gives to the world the eternal values of harmony and beauty.

Thirdly, to be itself may also mean that our bit of experience demands a completion which it has not yet reached, and which it aims thus to secure. The satisfaction of this demand gives to the world the values of progress and law and morality. And, finally, to be itself means to be ultimately without inner contradiction, to be a unity. If those various desires interfere with one another, if the order of knowledge and the beauty of happiness and the duty of morality cannot dwell together, then we have not a world which remains really unified in all eternity. Thus arises the ultimate demand that all the values become one, that the world remain absolutely itself; and the satisfaction of this demand brings us the values of religion and philosophy.

The objective world to which all our possible knowledge and interest refer must thus have four large groups of absolute values. We may call them shortly the logical, the æsthetical, the ethical, and the metaphysical values. They are independent of every personal preference, and thus belong eternally to the ultimate nature of the world, because they are simply the four necessary forms of the one demand, without which, reality would be an individual dream and never a common world. We must now interpret these four groups of values more distinctly and thus sketch the complete system of ideals. But before we enter into this most essential part, we have to return for a moment to our second question. Why does the fulfillment of the world's will give satisfaction to us?

Why is it eternally valuable to us that the things of the world reach their own ends?

Of course our way is barricaded if we ever allow to the positivist his popular equation between satisfaction and pleasure, — an equation which has no other support than the fact that we feel satisfied whenever our desire for pleasure becomes realized. But it is the realization which satisfies us, not the pleasure. The psychological misconstruction, to be sure, is natural, because pleasure is the one end whose idea awakes in us constantly the desire for the realization, just as pain stimulates constantly the desire for suppression. We may even define pleasure as a state which wants to be realized and pain as an experience which wants to be avoided. Yet the

fact remains fundamental that wherever pleasure is realized, it satisfies us not because it is pleasure but because it is a fulfillment of our internal activity directed towards this realization. Every enjoyment moves in a circle; the pleasure in it cannot be apperceived without the desire for its prolonged realization; and whenever it continues, it fulfills this demand and at the same time stirs up a new pulse of desire. But this most intimate relation between enjoyment and satisfaction must never hide the psychological truth that it is the fulfillment of the demand which alone can claim to represent the element of satisfaction. Wherever the free individual holds an idea through his own activity, there its realization completes the consciousness of satisfaction. Such an idea may

be a pleasure, and in that case the activity which aims towards realization needs no further impulse. Or it may be any other experience, neutral and indifferent; again, it will give us complete satisfaction if we hold it through our own activity till it is realized. Exactly this latter case is given wherever we take a bit of life-content and raise it to the dignity of being a piece of the real world. We have seen that that means nothing else than just to demand its selfhood, to demand that it can be found again, that it can be realized in a new experience. Wherever the world remains itself, there the world itself fulfills its purpose, and at the same time the subject which grasps it as a piece of the world must feel completely satisfied through the fulfillment, as it is the realization of

the retained idea. Our self is satisfied, not because of pleasures involved, but because that which we demand to be itself realizes itself through our own activity of retaining it. To acknowledge the dream of our life as a world, means to hold it before us as something which we want to have realized in a new experience. Wherever this realization is completed in the connections of truth, in the self-fulfillment of art, in the loyalty to duty, in the beliefs of religion and in the convictions of metaphysics, there a personal satisfaction is reached which must be absolute and eternal, as it is determined by no individual need but only by the acknowledgment of the world as such.

Of course, that does not exclude the real experience of such eternal value

from adding to the absolute satisfaction also an element of personal pleasure. Social life has the most immediate interest in uniting the personal joy with the over-personal value. The truth may be at the same time useful for our practical existence, and we may thus have a deep personal satisfaction in mastering a truth which can be helpful to us in the practical walks of life. Only we must not falsify the meaning of truth by claiming that the practical assistance which it furnishes to us constitutes the real value of truth itself. Whoever seeks truth does not know any demarcation line between the truth which is a tool to work with and the truth which we seek for truth's sake. And certainly the work of art might entertain us and give us a pleasant feeling; but this enjoyment, again, does

not make the value of beauty. And still more may we enjoy the effects of moral actions, the virtuous deed may make us and our fellows happy; but the enjoyable consequences do not constitute the eternal value of morality. Religion may give us a comfortable relaxation and may furnish us with enjoyable anticipations of future pleasures. That in itself does not justify the value of religion. Only when we respect the truth, the beauty, the morality, the eternity, without bargaining for personal help and pleasure and comfort, do we approach the values in their purity. And now let us take a bird's-eye view of the complete system of ideals.

We saw that the very first requirement of anything which wants to belong to the objective world, and thus

to be independent of the chance of the instant, is that it can be found again in another experience. This demand must be fulfilled in every case where we acknowledge an independent reality. If I have an idea, it is my imagination, or my hallucination, so long as it occurs in my thought alone; but as soon as I give to it the additional meaning that this idea occurs in the experience of everybody, it is no more a fiction, but a real thing of nature. Or perhaps there comes to me a suggestion which calls for my agreement or disagreement, for my sympathy or antipathy. Again it is nothing but a state of my mind so long as I do not throw into it the conviction that this suggestion and this feeling exist independent of my experience in still another mind, and

just by this act I create the idea of real fellow-men. And further; I feel will-impulses. They are my individual fancies so long as I do not think them as belonging to every possible human will. But as soon as I give them this meaning of perseverance, as soon as I fulfill their demand for being more than individual accident, then I have transformed them into that which we call duties and obligations. All the values of truth and reality belong, indeed, to one of these three classes: things, persons, and obligations. They represent the independent factors of the outer world about us, of the social world engaging us, of the moral world within us.

All these three worlds are built up by naïve, immediate apperception. But it is the purpose of science to

supplement these immediate given values by artificial creations which elaborate the values of the world in a systematic, complete, and lasting way. We shall find this doubleness of naïve and elaborated values in every one of the four fields. Here in the field of the logical values of reality it means that we have not only the immediate acknowledgment of things, persons, and duties, but also the created values of causal, historical, and logical knowledge. Yet the values of science are merely the more complete fulfillments of the demand for enduring existence. Think of the world of outer objects. Modern scientists pursue a thousand paths, and the scholar is not aware and cannot be aware of the ultimate ends towards which he is working. But silently they all coöperate in the

effort towards the one ideal, — to conceive the world as a system of objects which remains in every possible experience identical with itself. Every natural science has but the one aim, to contribute towards an understanding of the universe, by which every atom can be conceived as indestructible, in which nothing can appear and nothing disappear, in which the substance and its energies remain constant, and all the changes in the world can be understood through the persistence of the given system. If we want to have a world of things, this, its fundamental demand, to remain itself and not to change, must be fulfilled. And if we sympathize with the demand by acknowledging our experience as such a world, then we must feel its fulfillment as a satisfaction; that is, we must feel

every step forward in such an identifying reconstruction of the world as an approach to an absolute ideal, and every scientific truth as a real independent value.

Exactly in the same way as a naturalist seeks the persistence of material things, the historian creates the connected system of historical science. Here, too, the whole meaning of scientific work lies in the acknowledgment that personal influences are imperishable, that no human will is lost, and that the world of history is the world of individual will-relations. And finally, the manifold of over-individual acts of will leads to a system of logical connections in the mathematical and normative sciences. One mathematical judgment is there deduced from another; propositions are interpreted

and connected; but in their meaning the logical sciences have ultimately again the same purpose as the other sciences, to give persistence to an experience of ours, which is in this case not an idea, but an act and purpose. The judgment of the conclusion means really the same as the judgment in the premises, and the deduced propositions are completely contained in, and thus in their meaning identical with, the logical acts from which they are developed. The whole system of knowledge, from the naïve acknowledgment of independent things, persons, and duties to the highest system of mechanics, history, mathematics, and logic, is thus completely independent, in its ideal configuration, of any personal and historical setting. The chance conditions of personality and

historical influences decide how much or how little a man or a nation or a generation finds and discovers of the full truth; but the truth itself is absolute and eternal because it is given through the act which posits the world as world at all, and which gives thus to every experience the necessary demand to be itself, that is, to persevere throughout every possible further experience.

But we saw from the first that to be itself involves still another demand. It means a claim to be separated, independent, isolated, and thus without any relation to anything outside, complete in itself, not looking for any help or addition, fulfilling all its desires through itself. Wherever an experience comes to us in perfect fulfillment of this demand, there the world has

æsthetic value. Here again we find this at first in its naïve immediate form everywhere, in the outer world, in the social world, and in the inner world. In the outer world it is the beauty of nature, in the social world it is the harmony of man in peace and friendship and love, and in the inner world it is the complete harmonization of our experiences in happiness. Yes, happiness indeed belongs to the group of æsthetic values. Idealistic philosophy, realizing fully that happiness is not a moral value, has gone so far in its hostility to cheap utilitarianism as too often to throw happiness out altogether from the system of absolute values. Surely in the realm of absolute values, the complete beatitude of the mind has its important place, but it belongs, indeed, together with natural

beauty and social harmony, in the circle of æsthetic ideals. They all give us a manifold which becomes a unity by this complete self-realization; no demand which arises in its midst leads beyond the unified experience. We see the beautiful landscape. If it becomes an object of knowledge, it leads us away. We connect it with a thousand associations through which every rock and every tree and every bird are placed in the system of causal facts; we ask for what preceded, and for what will follow them. But if that landscape is to us an object of beauty, it must be complete in itself: every single demand which arises in one part is fulfilled in the other; and in this complete self-satisfaction the landscape remains isolated, separated from the remainder of the world, remains itself. It is this

mutual response of all parts involved which gives to the harmonious social group its self-consistency, and thus to friendship and love and peace their absolute value.

And just as science completes, through artificial creation, the naïve values of knowledge, so art completes the naïve æsthetic values. The artist envisages our experiences in such a form that they become completely self-dependent, and preserves them: the demand of every part is perfectly fulfilled by other parts of the artistic work, and thus the whole is eternally isolated from every other experience. Such isolation of outer experience gives us the fine arts; the isolation of social subjects gives us literature; the isolation of our inner movements is completed by music. The frame of

the picture separates that painted scene from every other thing in the world. There are no roads in the landscape which lead beyond the frame. Every line and every curve there has its own energies and its desires, and yet every one must be fulfilled in the picture itself or it is a poor piece of art. What the columns in the building seek, the roof must respond to. Nothing must be superfluous, and no demand unfulfilled. The people in the story and in the drama can have no desires to be satisfied when the novel is closed and the curtain has fallen. But wherever in the world through the immediate experience of natural beauty, social harmony, or perfect happiness, or through the artistic creation of poetry and music and fine art, a piece of the

world is reached whose demand for complete self-satisfaction is fulfilled, there we have a requirement satisfied which belongs to the ultimate structure of the world and thus represents an absolute value.

We turn to our third group. Wherever an experience involves a purpose, there the demand to be itself means the demand to realize itself; and wherever this demand is fulfilled, there again a satisfaction is reached which is independent of the liking of the spectator and thus a real value is constituted. Of course, we may say again that it is we who project the purpose into the thing or into the social group. Yes, but as soon as we have apperceived it as such, we are eternally bound by its own meaning; and if the acorn becomes an oak tree, if primi-

tive society grows towards differentiated forms of life, if the individual mind realizes itself in a busy life of labor, we no longer see in it merely the causal working, but the fulfillment of an intention, and we thus come to speak of progress and development: the object which we apperceived to have a purposive signification, we have found loyal to it. If the acorn of the oak should become an elephant, it would be merely a change, a transformation, but no development, because this realization was not intended in the purpose which we felt in the acorn. But since we cannot plunge into the chaos of immediate experience without grasping everywhere in the outer world, in the social world, and in the inner world, purposes which need to be fulfilled, their fulfillment really

means the absolute value of development and progress; a value which, we saw, is quite beyond the grasp of the mere scientific statement of the events in nature and mind.

And just as science and art cultivate systematically the naïve values of immediate appreciation, so civilization unfolds new values of purposive realization. Nature as a whole then becomes purposive in its relation to us, and we reach thus the values of technical civilization. Every mastery over stubborn nature becomes, then, of real absolute value. The material of our work fulfills by every technical advance in a higher degree its ultimate purpose, and every invention and discovery is thus an approach to a superpersonal ideal. The same repeats itself in the social and in the inner worlds.

In the social sphere the purposes become realized through the law, and in the inner sphere through morality. Of course, it is true, and the modern sophists can easily point out, that the laws of states and the moral prescriptions of individuals in different lands and times are varied. And yet they all aim towards the same eternal value: self-fulfillment, self-realization. There was never any other valid law for the members of any community than to realize through their actions what they themselves really want. All politics and all legislatures, all courts and judges and prisons, serve merely the one purpose, to realize the will of the community. And if they become instrumental in producing effects which are not really intended by the deepest purposes of the community, then alone

do we have lawlessness and injustice; then the eternal value of law is undermined.

The same holds for the inner world. There is not and has never been another moral law than the one designed to realize through our action that which we really demand in our deepest over-individual purpose. We are, each one of us, an absolutely valuable part of the world only if we can think of ourselves as an agency which realizes our deepest purposes and carries out through action, regardless of consequences, that which we ourselves consistently prefer. Moral value cannot be predicated of the act which we perform, inasmuch as it might just as well be performed from an indifferent or sordid motive, but morally valuable to all eternity is the correspondence be-

tween our act and our deepest purpose. How we came to that purpose which represents our deepest self is a question of causal science and of history, and has nothing whatsoever to do with the moral aspect of that purpose. If we know what we really will, if we know our deepest self and its purpose, then we are loyal to ourselves; and we belong thus to the true, absolute world with its eternal demand for self-loyalty only if we carry out our purpose, — that is, if we fulfill our duty as we understand it.

But this organization of chaotic experience into a world which persists in its independent reality, which is perfect in self-harmony, which is self-realizing in morality, creates thus through the very fulfillment of these particular demands a world of conflicts and in-

terferences. The causal order, perhaps, destroys the hope for moral development. The logical truth may mean evil and death to the moral striving, and the performance of duty may annihilate the harmony of happiness. If the acknowledgment of a world implies that the world is to be thought in unity with itself, then it carries with it the demand that a complete harmonization of these interfering postulates be practically realized and recognized if we are to understand the world as a whole. No perception can show to us the fulfillment of this demand; no mere dream or imagination, on the other hand, can fulfill it. That which completely fulfills it for us is the system of our convictions. Their immediate form is religion. If we transcend the outer world by our convictions,

we come to God; if we transcend the social world, we come to immortality; if we transcend our inner sphere and link it with religious convictions, we come to the belief in providential leading. In every one of these conceptions, the world of things and of men and of duties is developed into a system in which the logical, æsthetical, and ethical demands are unified, in which the causal events of the universe and the moral duties and the desire for happiness are no longer in conflict. Religion, too, can speak a hundred languages, as the logical, æsthetic, and ethical demands which must be harmonized may vary from man to man, from time to time. But the value of the conviction that the reality in which we live, if we knew it completely, would be perfectly harmonious in the

totality of its demands, is eternal and absolute.

But just as science and art and civilization develop systematically the naïve apperception of the immediate values in the world, so in this last realm, philosophy completes the function of religion. Philosophy harmonizes too the conflict of demands, but not by building up a superstructure of religious convictions, but by laying down a substructure, on which this whole world of appearances can rest, a substructure out of which the apparent conflicts can be understood as apparent only, and thus as not really conflicting in the ultimate being of the world. The critical philosopher turns indeed to the outer world, not to seek the God beyond it, but the transcendental consciousness underlying the idea of the

world itself; and he turns to the world of men, not to make men live in time after death, but to reach the transcendental act of reason, by which alone the life of mankind can attain all the value of reality. And to the inner world he finally turns, not to seek its religious ties with the absolute beyond, but to understand its transcendental selfhood as itself the absolute condition of the whole theoretical and practical reality. There he finds the one self-harmonious will, whose absolute act of positing the world thus creates through its own will the conflicting demands for causal connection and harmonious happiness and striving development and self-loyal morality. But the metaphysical conceptions of philosophy and religion are thus by different means aiming toward the same goal.

And this, of course, completes the circle of absolute values. No possible, self-consistent idealism can go farther than to show, indeed, that if we deal with the world at all, and do not mean merely a dream and a chaos, we must accept all these demands of the world, sympathize with them, and feel their fulfillment as satisfactions having no reference to individual likings, and thus as being absolutely valuable for every one who shares the world.

And if the scientist wants the last word after all, and tells us, perhaps, that all such thoughts of absoluteness and eternity are merely psychical ideas which must come up by causal necessity in brains of this kind of organization, under this kind of social influences, in this part of the physical

universe, and that all idealism thus is merely the result of causal connections of which science alone can give account, then we may willingly say that he is perfectly right, so far as the scientific interest is concerned. The philosopher, too, and his thoughts are indeed part of that universe, and all its causal laws are applicable to the products of his brain. The scientist forgets only that all this causal explanation has no meaning whatsoever, and his statements no truth, and his universe no reality, if he and we are not presupposing an idealistic belief in those absolute standards of eternal values by which we can discriminate the true and untrue, the good and the bad, the real and the unreal. No one can be forced to convictions. We must decide for ourselves what ideals we

wish to uphold, whether we want the world to be a world for us or merely a dream and a chaos; but this at least we must understand, that science falls asunder if we disbelieve in absolute ideals.

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